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Will Artificial Intelligence really change the way we work?

3 predictions regarding which implications the fourth industrial revolution could have on the world of work and training.

Several times we talked about Artificial Intelligence (AI) as the new frontier of eLearning of the year 2018 and 2019.

But which implications could this "revolution" have in the world of work?

A global estimate indicates that by 2030 up to 375 million people could change their professional category and learn new skills related to AI and automation.
Also Rand Hindi, data scientist, co-founder and CEO of the technology company Snips, as Talent Connect 2018 speaker, has expressed this opinion. According to the CEO, the skills necessary for the professionals of the future will not be technical, but human (just those that machines will never be able to replicate).

"The idea that AI will one day be able to totally replace human beings is science fiction." At the most, AI will carry out logical and mechanical tasks and even on this, to date, there is still a long way to go" Hindi says, so he makes three forecasts about the real significance of the fourth industrial revolution for the future workforce (including training professionals).

1. AI will never replace humans, because it is incapable of emotional intelligence

Artificial intelligence is already on the market and in our lives, just think of the virtual assistants we use every day. Many people (including recruiters) are worried about losing their jobs due to the spread of artificial intelligence and automation in every sector. According to Rand, these fears are fuelled by a misunderstanding about what artificial intelligence can and can not do in reality.
"Artificial intelligence is one of those things that everyone talks about, but nobody can explain what it is," he says. "Artificial intelligence consists of machines that, very simply, reproduce human behaviour".

Rand emphasizes that artificial intelligence can learn and make logical decisions based on data. So any activity associated with logic can be automated, but tasks that require emotional intelligence are a totally different story.
"Emotional intelligence is extremely important in everyday life," he says. "It's also the way we solve paradoxes, that is something that logic can not solve".

Most of AI's film representations are wrong in this sense, confusing logical reasoning with solving all kind problems. While a human being can use a mix of logic and emotional intelligence to solve a paradoxical problem, a machine will always have to rely only on logic, limiting its decision-making skills.
Hindi bets that "within a few years we will no longer use the term 'artificial intelligence'" and exhorts to renounce "this false myth that human intelligence can be recreated in a machine" to realistically admit what the machines are: mere instruments.

2 . AI will handle logical tasks, leaving humans free to focus on the more emotional aspects of the work

According to the speaker, when people understand the actual possibilities and limits of the AI they will realize that greater automation in the workplace will bring us benefits. "We have to stop thinking about humans against machines, the best combination is between human and artificial intelligence".

Since human beings will never be able to match the IQ of artificial intelligence, Hindi predicts that the quotient of emotional intelligence (EQ) will become increasingly valuable to tomorrow's employers. In fact, this is already happening: it is expected that the EQ will be one of the most requested workplace skills by 2020.

The cohabitation between humans and machines will not lead to a desolate and dystopian future; on the contrary, when machines take on most of the mechanical aspects of the work, human work will be more human and pleasant.
"People do not want to be machines," he says, "In fact, what people want is to experience more emotions, they want things that are very, very human, they actually want to get rid of most of the daily mechanical tasks so they can concentrate about things that make them feel good, that give them a purpose, they're passionate about - things that really make us feel like we're on holiday even when we're working".

3. Technical skills will become automated and the demand for transversal skills will grow

Machines will not replace humanemployees, but will cause a change in the labour market. We have seen that technical, logical and "teachable" skills are those with the greatest risk of automation. On the other hand, transversal skills (or soft skills) require a high level of EQ and can not be learnt by machines.

Recruiters will have to rethink and refine their selection strategies to investigate transversal skills. For some candidates, this will mean constantly designing a re-skilling process to maintain their skills relevant to the changing needs of the labour market. Furthermore, companies should consider the possibility of offering ad hoc training courses to employees.
"Starting to learn how to effectively manage and integrate soft skills is a major paradigm shift in today's educational system: the idea of training (for years) on a specific technical skill in order to do that for the rest of the life no longer makes sense, and many governments, for example the French, are actively working to promote continuous and adaptive learning".

For companies that promote a culture of lifelong learning and embrace the emotional aspect of work, the future is bright. In this future, machines will be able to handle purely logical, mechanical and boring tasks in shorter times, in a cheaper and better way than any human being. On the other hand, employees will find more and more meaning and purpose in the work, because it will be a job that only they can do.

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